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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/06/2011
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PL](#)
SUBJECT: NEW HEAD OF CHANCELLERY A LOYAL KACZYNSKI
CONFIDANTE

Classified By: CDA Kenneth M. Hillas, reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. 43-year-old Aleksander Szczyglo is a Lech Kaczynski protege and one of the President's closest confidantes. Szczyglo's appointment as Head of the Presidential Chancellery will assure a loyal staff operation, but may not necessarily affect policy formulation. Though a member of the inner circle of the President and his brother PM Jaroslaw Kaczynski, Szczyglo appears at first glance to be a follower rather than someone who will bring new ideas or initiate policy in his own right. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) Aleksander Marek Szczyglo was appointed Head of the Presidential Chancellery on August 2, 2006. During the official swearing in President Lech Kaczynski emphasized that he had known Szczyglo for many years and called him "one of my closest friends and co-workers." Szczyglo had previously been Deputy Minister of Defense since December 23, 2005, with responsibility for social policy and supervision of the military intelligence services. He is a member of the ruling Law and Justice party (PiS), serving his second four-year term in parliament (re-elected in September 2005). In the previous parliament (2001-2005), Szczyglo was Deputy Chairman of the parliamentary committee for European Affairs (previously the EU Affairs committee) and also sat on the Committee for Constitutional Accountability.

¶3. (U) For several months prior to his election to Parliament in 2001, Szczyglo was an advisor to the Chairman of the Management Board of PKO BP Bank. From 1997 to 2000, he worked as a department director in the European Integration Committee (UKIE). From January to October of 1997, Szczyglo served as Advisor to the Chief Inspector of the Main Labor Inspectorate, and he worked 1992-1995 as Chief of Cabinet to the Chairman of the Supreme Audit Chamber (NIK) when Lech

Kaczynski held that office. Szczyglo worked 1991-1992 in the National Security Bureau, and 1990-1991 in the legal office of the Solidarity's National Committee.

¶4. (U) Aleksander Szczyglo graduated in 1990 from the Law and Administration Department of Gdansk University, where he was a favorite student of then-Professor Lech Kaczynski. Szczyglo completed postgraduate studies in administration at the University of Wisconsin in 1996. He was born October 27, 1963 in Jeziorany in the northeast of Poland. Szczyglo is single, although press reports about his nomination recalled that in the past he has been seen in public with Elzbieta Kruk, another long-time Lech Kaczynski confidante who is now head of the National Radio and Television Council (KRRiT) and is also single.

¶5. (C) Szczyglo resembles Lech Kaczynski in temperament - quiet and reserved. In meetings with foreign diplomats, he sometimes can be stiff and taciturn. He speaks with the intensity and conviction of a committed Solidarity activist and ardent anti-Communist. When discussing military reforms soon after the PiS government took office, Szczyglo returned again and again to the theme of "purging" the military of all vestiges of the pre-1989 Communist era, echoing the overall PiS approach. While at MOD, Szczyglo also advocated continued and even broadened military conscription -- notwithstanding the Defense Minister's public goal of moving to an all professional force -- as a means to "educate the youth of our nation and instill an appropriate sense of patriotism."

¶6. (C) Aleksander Szczyglo is clearly a close confidante of Lech Kaczynski. Whether he has a similarly close political relationship with PM Jaroslaw Kaczynski is not clear. Szczyglo is regarded as intensely loyal to Lech, who has been his mentor both academically and professionally. According to the media, Szczyglo is one of the few people in Poland whom the extremely private and reserved Lech Kaczynski allows to address him by his first name, - and reportedly he can walk into the President's office any time he wants.

¶7. (C) COMMENT. Although in the inner circle, Szczyglo seems less an initiator of policy than a loyal supporter, and is thus seemingly perfectly suited to head Lech's Chancellery. His appointment will bring the Chancellery under firm control, which was not always the case under his predecessor Andrzej Urbanski. One of Szczyglo's challenges will be to enhance the coordination of policy-making with and between the PM's chancellery and relevant ministries. We do not expect Szczyglo to have a significant impact on the direction of Polish foreign and defense policy - he is more likely to focus on coordination and implementation than on substance.
END COMMENT
HILLAS